

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

WHEREAS, there is a severe shortage of available influenza vaccine due to manufacturing problems at one major distributor; and

WHEREAS, the shortage of vaccine may result in an inability to immunize all persons who are at risk of serious illness or death due to influenza; and

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) is the sole advisor of the State in all questions involving the protection of the public health within its limits pursuant to SC Code of Laws Section 44-1-110; and

WHEREAS, DHEC may make orders and rules for the purpose of preventing and suppressing the spread of disease, and protecting the public health with regard to communicable, contagious and infectious diseases and other dangers to the public's life and health, pursuant to SC Code of Laws Sections 44-1-80 and 44-1-140; and

WHEREAS, DHEC has general direction and supervision of vaccination, screening and immunization in this state in regard to contagious diseases pursuant to SC Code of Laws Section 44-29-40; and

WHEREAS, because of this urgent situation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in coordination with its Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP), has issued interim recommendations for influenza vaccination during the 2004–05 season. These interim recommendations were formally recommended by ACIP on October 5, 2004, and take precedence over earlier recommendations;

THEREFORE, DHEC, pursuant to its authority granted in law, adopts the recommendations of the CDC and ACIP for the protection of the public's health and issues the following advisory:

The following criteria shall be applied for the administration of influenza vaccine in all public and private hospitals, physician offices, clinics and other locations where immunizations are being administered in South Carolina:

Priority Groups for Influenza Vaccination

The priority groups for vaccination with inactivated influenza vaccine this season are:

- all children aged 6–23 months;
- adults aged 65 years and older;
- persons aged 2–64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions;

- all women who will be pregnant during the influenza season;
- residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities;
- children aged 6 months–18 years on chronic aspirin therapy;
- health-care workers involved in direct patient care; and
- out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged <6 months.

Other Vaccination Recommendations

- Persons in priority groups identified above should be encouraged to search locally for vaccine if their regular health-care provider does not have vaccine available.
- Intranasally administered, live, attenuated influenza vaccine, if available, should be encouraged for healthy persons who are aged 5–49 years and are not pregnant, including health-care workers (except those who care for severely immunocompromised patients in special care units) and persons caring for children aged <6 months.
- Certain children aged <9 years require 2 doses of vaccine if they have not previously been vaccinated. All children at high risk for complications from influenza, including those aged 6–23 months, who present for vaccination, should be vaccinated with a first or second dose, depending on vaccination status. However, doses should not be held in reserve to ensure that 2 doses will be available. Instead, available vaccine should be used to vaccinate persons in priority groups on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Vaccination of Persons in Nonpriority Groups

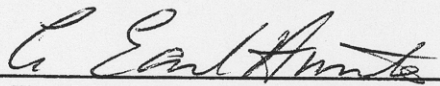
Persons who are not included in one of the priority groups described above should be informed about the urgent vaccine supply situation and asked to forego or defer vaccination.

Persons Who Should Not Receive Influenza Vaccine

Persons in the following groups should not receive influenza vaccine before talking with their doctor:

- persons with a severe allergy (i.e., anaphylactic allergic reaction) to hens' eggs and
- persons who previously had onset of Guillain-Barré syndrome during the 6 weeks after receiving influenza vaccine

THIS PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY SHALL BE PROMINANTLY POSTED AT ALL LOCATIONS WHERE INFLUENZA VACCINE IS ADMINISTERED. THIS ADVISORY SHALL TAKE EFFECT IMMEDIATELY.


 C. Earl Hunter, Commissioner

10-14-04
 Date